

Message Text

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FOR STYLES

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAIR, UK

SUBJECT: CIVAIR - UK USER CHARGES

1. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (DOT) HAS SENT TWO PAPERS
ON UK USER CHARGES TO KUTZKE WITH INSTRUCTIONS TO PASS
SHORTER TO UK DELEGATION AND USE LONGER ONLY FOR BACKGROUND.
NEITHER HAS STATE CLEARANCE. WE HAD OPPORTUNITY TO COMMENT
ON THE BACKGROUND PAPER, BUT DID NOT SEE THE OTHER BEFORE
DESPATCH.

2. BELIEVE U.S. DELEGATION WILL WISH TO CONSIDER BOTH
PAPERS CAREFULLY BEFORE USING, IF AT ALL. SHORTER PAPER
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APPEARS UNNECESSARILY PUGNACIOUS AND DOES NOT FULLY
REFLECT EARLIER BRITISH PAPERS. ITEM B.7. APPEARS TO
SUGGEST THAT THE U.S. WOULD FAVOR A COMMON PEAK CHARGE AT
ALL BAA TERMINALS; THIS SEEMS UNLIKELY, AND WOULD IGNORE
THE IMPORTANT DIFFERENCES AMONG THE TERMINALS. (THIS
APPROACH ALSO TENDS TO UNDERCUT 3.B. BELOW.) BACKGROUND
PAPER SPENDS CONSIDERABLE TIME ON PROBABLY IRRELEVANT

ISSUES OF A) WHETHER OR NOT PEAK CHARGES CAN BE PASSED TO THE PASSENGER AND B) THE POTENTIAL ADVERSE IMPACT ON INTERNATIONAL AVIATION OF MOVING TRAFFIC AT HEATHROW OUT OF

THE PEAK. ITS LAST SENTENCE ENVISAGES RESOLUTION OF REMAINING DIFFERENCES IN A TECHNICAL WORKING GROUP DURING THE PRESENT ROUND OF NEGOTIATIONS WITHOUT CONSIDERING WHETHER U.S. DELEGATION IS PROPERLY STAFFED FOR SUCH AN EFFORT. WHILE ISSUE IS PROBABLY RIPE FOR SOME MORE ACROSS-THE-TABLE DISCUSSION, YOU MAY FEEL DIFFERENT TIMING AND FORUM ARE PREFERABLE.

3. SUGGEST FOLLOWING TALKING POINTS ON USER CHARGE SUBJECT:

A. MOST RECENT U.K. PAPER ON BAA (BRITISH AIRPORTS AUTHORITY) PEAK PRICING POLICY WAS VERY HELPFUL, BUT A NUMBER OF QUESTIONS REMAIN. WE HAVE A LIST OF SOME OF THEM, BUT SUGGEST THAT A GIVE-AND-TAKE DISCUSSION IN THE NEAR FUTURE WOULD BE USEFUL. UNTIL WE ARE SATISFIED THAT THE BAA CHARGES ARE NEITHER EXCESSIVE NOR OTHERWISE DISCRIMINATORY WE CANNOT AGREE THAT THE MATTER SHOULD BE LEFT TO BAA AND THE AIRLINES.

B. WE CONTINUE TO FEEL THAT A DEFINITION OF THE PEAK THAT LOOKS ALMOST EXCLUSIVELY TO THE PEAK AT HEATHROW'S TERMINAL III IN EFFECT DISCRIMINATES AGAINST USERS OF THAT TERMINAL.

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C. THE U.S. IS PARTICULARLY CONCERNED AT THE BRITISH RELUCTANCE TO PHASE OUT FLIGHT LENGTH COMPLETELY AS A DETERMINANT OF USER CHARGES. THE RECENT BRITISH PAPER OBSERVES THAT THE IMPORTANCE OF WEIGHT AS A DETERMINANT HAS BEEN REDUCED BECAUSE WEIGHT "IS NO LONGER A SIGNIFICANT DETERMINANT OF AIRPORT COSTS". FLIGHT LENGTH PER SE NEVER WAS EVEN AN INSIGNIFICANT DETERMINANT OF AIRPORT COSTS. IT WAS FOR THIS REASON THAT THE BAA'S EARLIER DISTINCTION BETWEEN REGIONAL AND INTERCONTINENTAL FLIGHTS WAS FOUND TO BE DISCRIMINATORY. CAN YOU PROMISE US THAT FLIGHT LENGTH WILL BE COMPLETELY ELIMINATED BY APRIL 1, 1978? VANCE

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